

2021 Annual Report

Transition and Recovery



Northwest
Parking District

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2021 Annual Report Transition and Recovery

**Northwest
Parking District**

MAY 2022





Northwest Portland



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Introduction

Overview

Northwest Portland is a dense neighborhood. It's close to the central city and attracts many residents, visitors, and employers. Its continued growth necessitates more management of transportation and parking there.

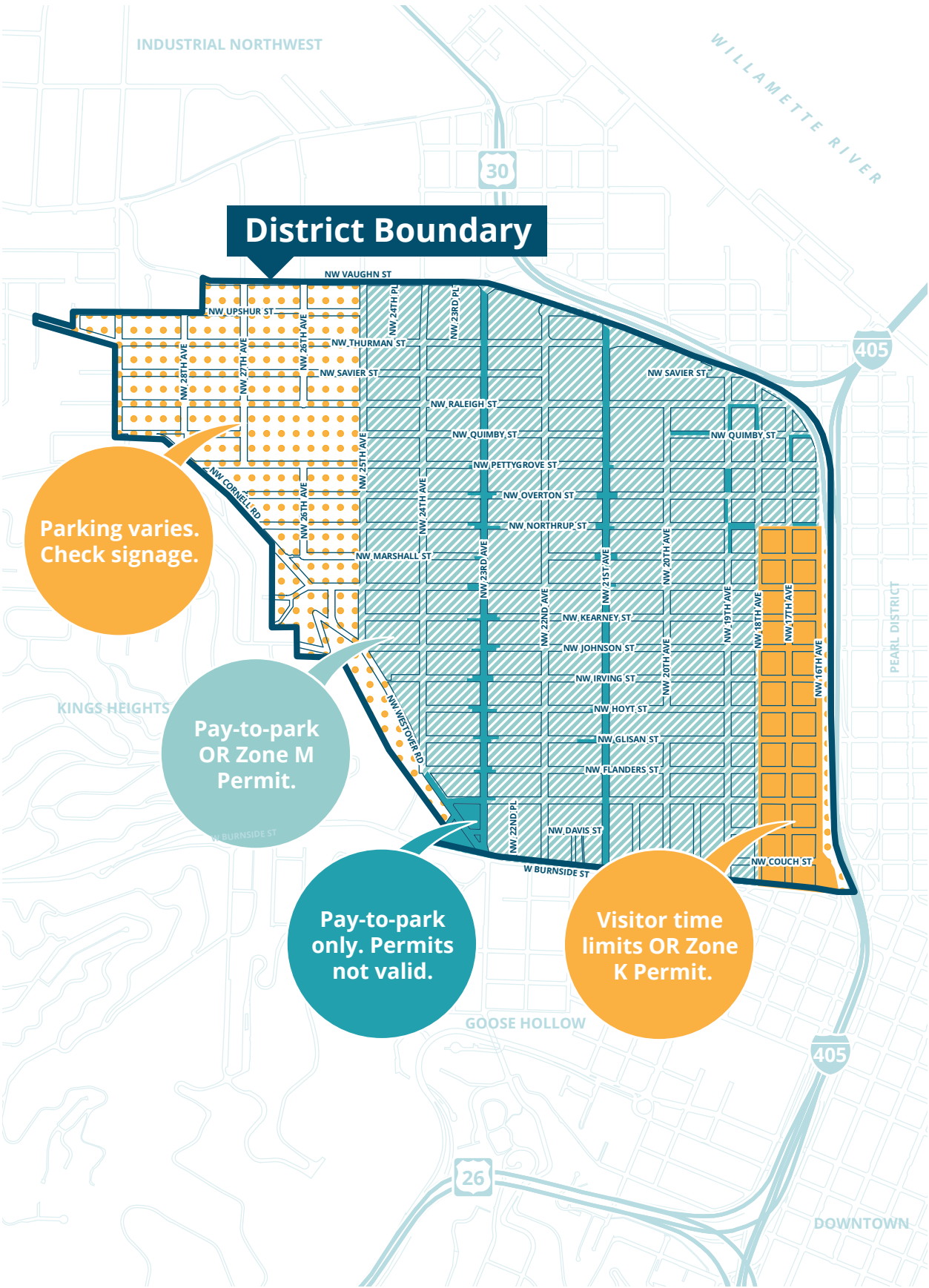
The Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) helped create the Northwest Portland Parking District in 2013 to help:

— **Balance the demands for parking**

— **Manage parking efficiently**

— **Provide a full range of transportation options for residents and businesses**

— **Reduce the amount of people driving alone**



2021: Year of transition and recovery

The Northwest Parking District experienced a lot of transition last year. For the first time, Parking Operations **switched all parking permits to a virtual format** based on license plates, not on physical stickers or hangers. This move provided more flexibility for permit holders and made the system more efficient. It also meant PBOT staff working remotely could provide the same, if not better, levels of service to residents and businesses.

The last year has also been one of **recovery toward pre-pandemic levels**. Vehicle trips are up 21% from 2020. The turnover for individual parking spaces over the course of an hour increased 12%. There was also a marked increase in visitors to the area compared to permit holders, up 29% on average.



Occupancy and Utilization

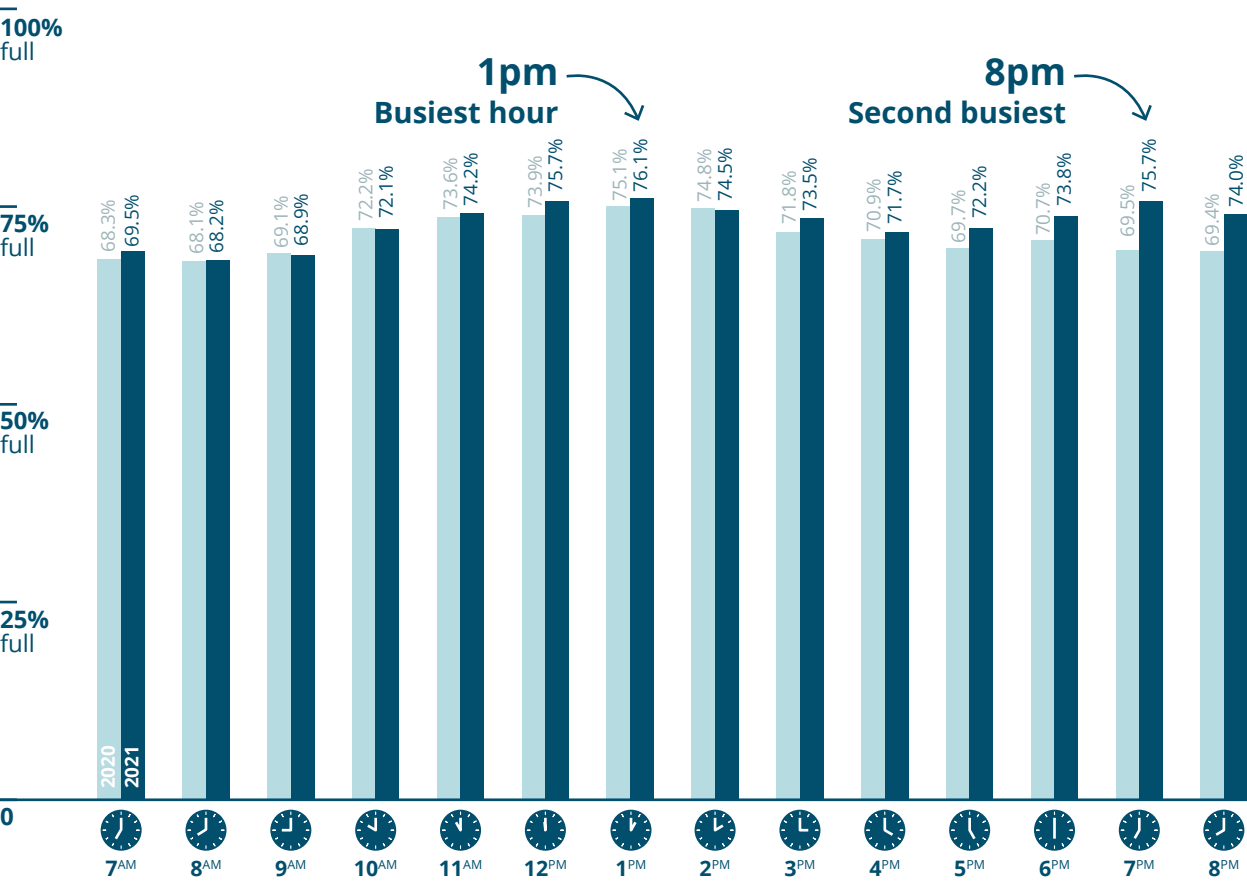
Occupancy

Parking occupancy measures the number of on-street parking spaces against the number of vehicles parked in them.

In 11 of the 14 hours of the day we measured, 2021 occupancy rates **exceeded the previous year**, averaging 2.3% higher than 2020. As signs of an optimal system, overall parking occupancy for the district never exceeded 85% during any hour studied in 2021, same as in 2020.

The graphic here shows a typical occupancy peak during the lunch hour, from 1–2 p.m. (76.1% in 2021), with the second highest occupancy in the 7–8 p.m. hour (75.7%) just after most meters stop requiring payment. **This trend is not new and consistent with what we saw prior to the pandemic.** Behind the graph, however, when you look at single block faces, 40% of them had occupancy rates above 85%.

Occupancy by Hour
■ 2020 vs. ■ 2021



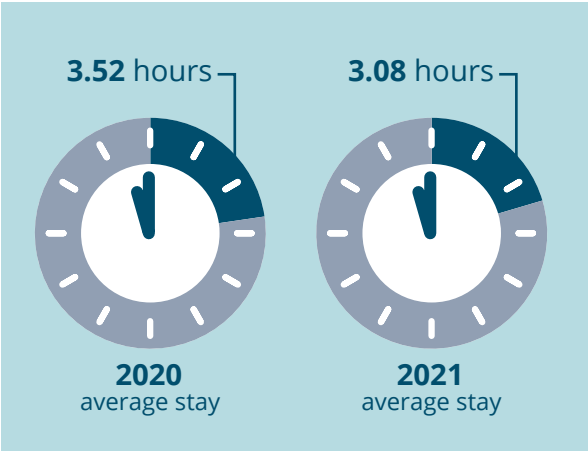
Utilization

Parking utilization measures how many vehicles park in any given spot and how long they stay there.

As stated above, vehicle trips rose 21% in 2021 compared to 2020. We also saw a large drop in Zone M permit holders using on-street spaces compared to visitors without Zone M permits. Looking at the most crowded noon hour in 2021, permit-holders represented 48.5% of vehicles parked, a 10% drop from 2020.

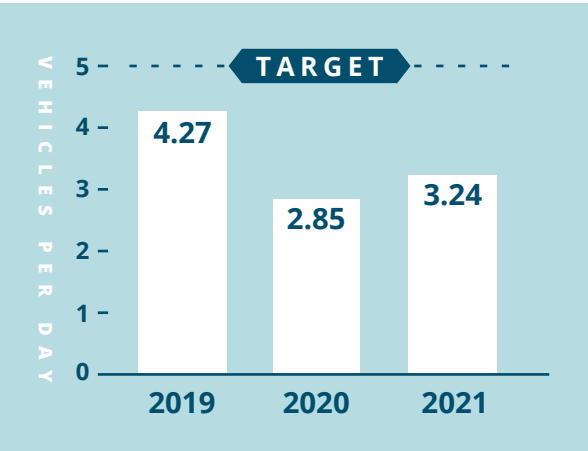
Clearly there were more visitors traffic to this area in 2021 than 2020. In 2021, only two of the 14 hours studied showed more permit-holders parking than visitors without permits. In 2020, 12 out of 14 hours studied showed more permit-holders parking than visitors.

People paying for parking without Zone M permits stayed an average of 3.08 hours in 2021, a **12% drop** from 2020:



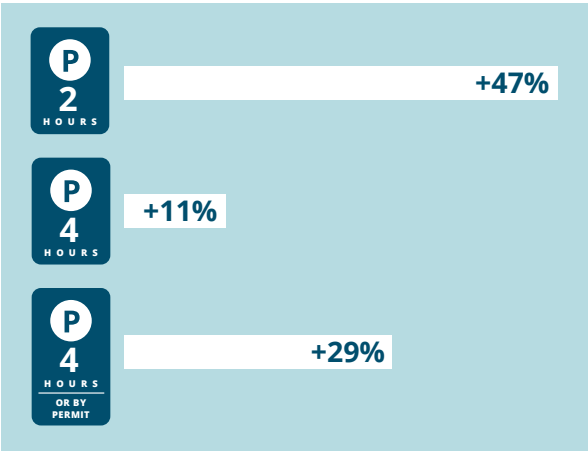
Average Stay

The average turnover rate of on-street parking spots used by visitors without a Zone M permit was 3.24 vehicles/day in 2021, compared with 2.85 in 2020 and 4.27 in 2019. The target rate is 5 vehicles/day.



Turnover Rate

Looking at different parking spaces with different time limits, we saw a large increase in visitors without Zone M permits paying to park there:



Increase from 2020 to 2021 in visitors paying to park
(without zone M permits)

District Investment

Annual funding for the Northwest Parking District comes from two key sources:

- \$120 permit surcharge for Zone M parking permits that is waived for income-based permits (this is a fee in addition to the \$75 charged for a permit). Funds from the permit surcharge are used for programs and projects that reduce demand for on-street parking and encourages other transportation options.
- 51% of net meter revenue from the meter district. Funds from net meter revenue are used for transportation services and programs within the district.

Net Meter Revenue and Permit Surcharge Reinvestment 2016–2021



Zone M Permits

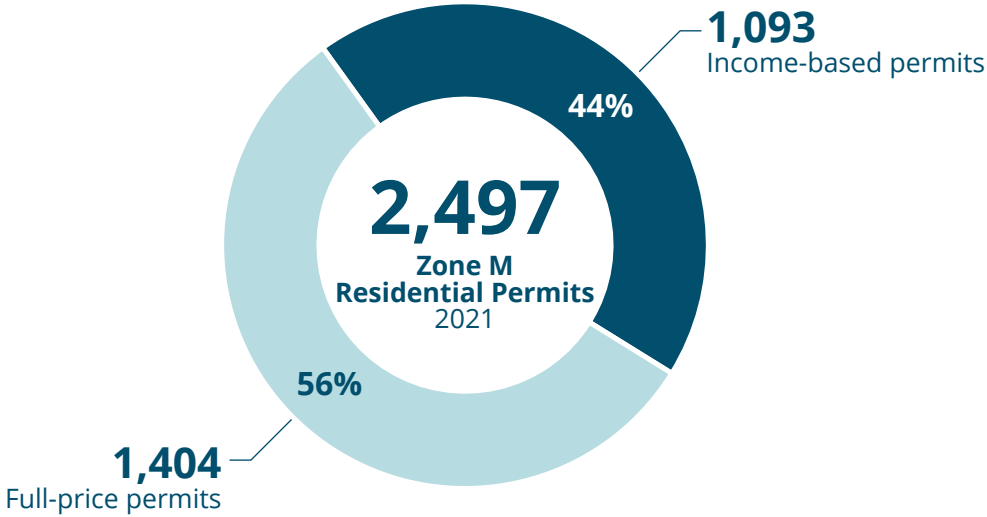
PBOT helped create the Zone M permit program to limit people from parking in Northwest when their final destination was elsewhere. In 2016, city council approved a pilot program which eventually implemented a permit surcharge for all of Zone M.

Residential Permits

- The Zone M permit total cost is \$195 (\$75 permit fee + \$120 permit surcharge)
- Permits are limited to one per licensed driver (maximum of three per household).
- If a resident has off-street parking on their property, such a driveway or garage, they may not be eligible for a permit.

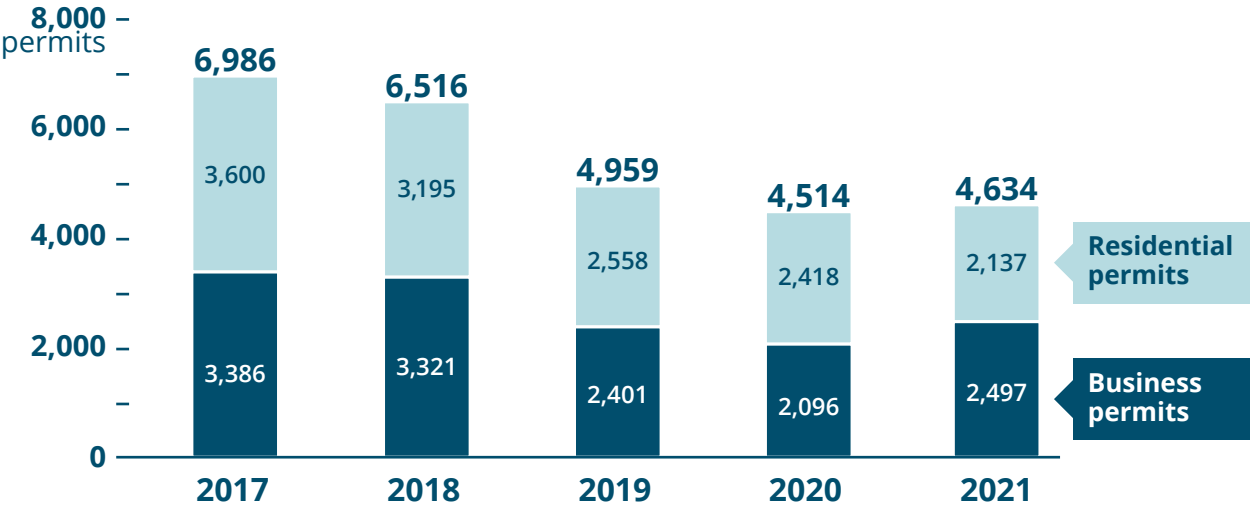
Income-Based Residential Permits

Residents who earn 80% of Area Median Income or less pay just \$75 for their permit, without the \$120 permit surcharge. PBOT issued 2,497 residential zone M permits in 2021. Of those, 1,093 were income-based.



Business Permits

- The Zone M permit total cost is \$195 (\$75 permit fee + \$120 permit surcharge)
- Businesses can purchase parking permits for their staff, up to 80% of the number of employees, measured in the equivalent of full-time employees, or FTE. PBOT caps this at 50 permits unless the Northwest Parking District Stakeholder Committee grants an exemption. Additional Zone M permits are \$390 each.
- In 2021, PBOT issued 4,634 Zone M permits, up 3% from 2020 but still **7% lower than pre-pandemic levels** in 2019.




Transition to Online Permits

PBOT’s Area Parking Permit Program launched an online permit system in 2021. Residents and employees can now purchase a Zone M permit online 24/7 and associate it with their vehicle’s license plate. No more paper applications. And no need to come to our office for things like guest permits. Permits are also issued on a rolling basis based on the date purchased, not tied to a particular month or quarter.


The new system has benefits for everyone. No waiting for mail. Nothing to display in the vehicle. Everything is done by license plate, which also makes things easier for parking enforcement. Think a car was abandoned in your neighborhood? Use our system’s [handy tool to lookup up parking permits](#).

The Area Parking Permit team did extensive outreach to residents and businesses in the district to let them know about the new system. They sent out 5,942 mailers, created four video tutorials about using the new system. They also hosted four live informational webinars that included question-and-answer sessions with staff.

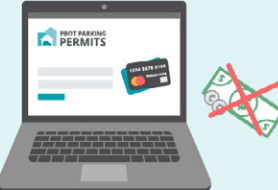
To date, more than 6,600 Zone M permits have successfully transitioned to the online permit system.



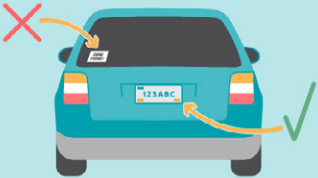
Apply for permits and upload supporting documents through the new website.




PBOT communicates all permit information via e-mail and text.




You will pay for your permit online. Cash will no longer be accepted.



No more paper permits!
Your license plate number serves as your permit.



Manage guest and employee license plate numbers online (if applicable).



Projects and Programs

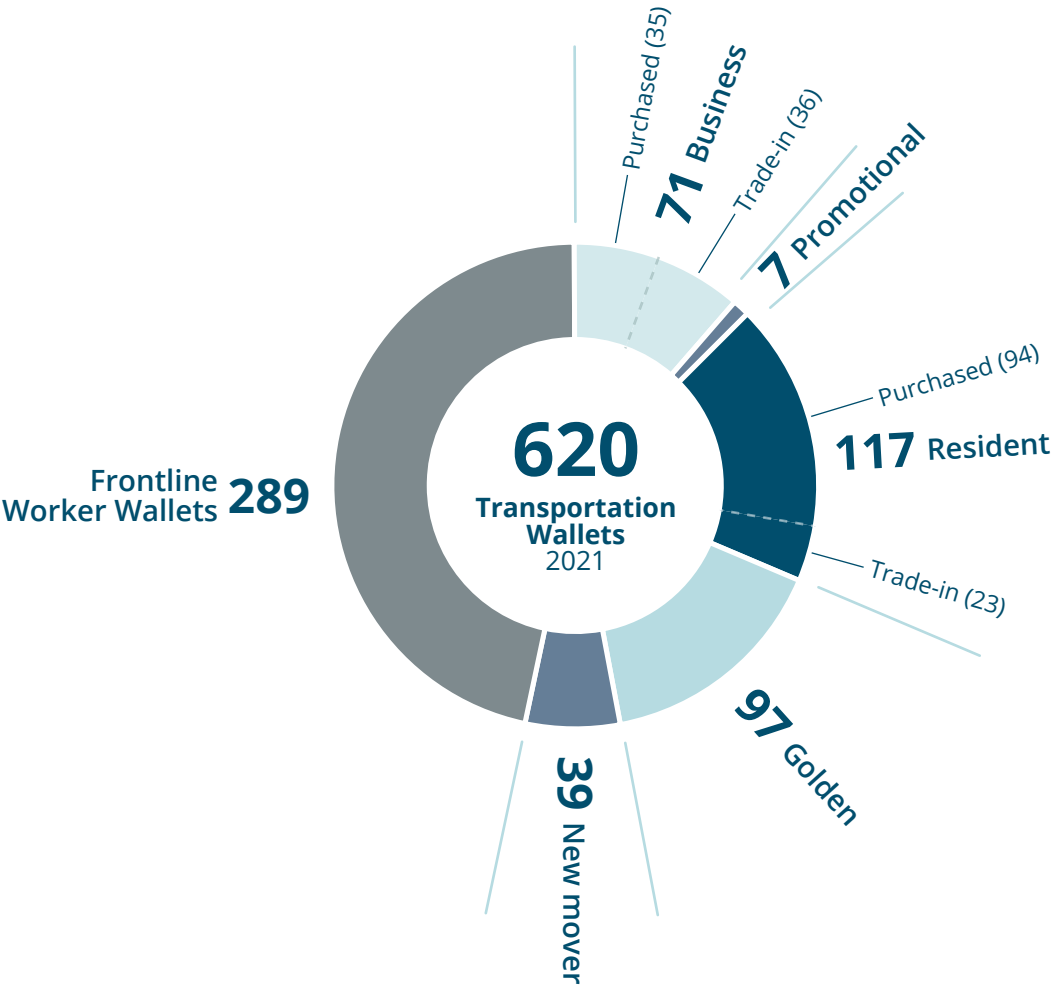
Transportation Wallet

The Transportation Wallet is a package of discounted transportation services including TriMet, Portland Streetcar, BIKETOWN bike-share, e-scooters and Free2Move carshare. This program is partially funded by the permit surcharge. Valued at \$672, Transportation Wallets can be purchased for \$99 or by trading in their area parking permit.

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New residents to Northwest are eligible to receive a one-time free “New Mover” Transportation Wallet if they do not get a Zone M permit. Residents living on a lower income can also get these benefits at no cost through the Golden Transportation Wallet program.

In 2021, PBOT distributed free Transportation Wallets to frontline workers in the district. This effort was intended to support those who continued to work through the pandemic, making it possible for businesses in Northwest to remain open.



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Curb extensions

City Council adopted the Northwest in Motion plan in October 2020, a plan designed to make the Northwest Parking District safer and more convenient for pedestrians as well as people biking and taking transit. Northwest in Motion identified 17 intersections in need of curb extensions. Delineated with paint and posts, these curb extensions were later beautified by City Repair with murals funded by the district. **21 curb extensions at 9 intersections got this treatment in 2021.** Another eight will be installed in 2022.

Bike parking

The Northwest Bike Parking Fund lets properties create or expand long-term bike parking. PBOT provides up to \$5,000 in equipment per property, while property owners provide the space and pay for installation. With the help of this fund, **146 new bike parking spaces in six buildings came online in 2021.** Since 2018, 320 spaces have been created in 15 buildings.



Go by Greenways: NW Gems

To celebrate the opening of the NW Flanders Bridge and NW Flanders Greenways in June of 2021 the NW Parking District sponsored a scavenger hunt style campaign called Go By Greenways: NW Gems. **Eight gem locations across Northwest Portland highlighted local businesses and attractions that are now more accessible to people walking, biking, and scooting.** To participate visitors and residents in the area were encouraged to find the gems on the map to find a secret word that was then texted by phone to be automatically entered into drawings for fun prizes, purchased from 13 local businesses. 244 people participated and 98 selfies were submitted while playing!



2022 and Beyond

Off-Street Demand and Feasibility Study

PBOT kicked off an Off-Street Demand and Feasibility Study in September 2021 which will conclude in summer 2022. The study will look into how much parking surplus there is in the district and what opportunities there may be to increase the supply of public parking. Recommendations from the study will help the Northwest Parking District Stakeholder Advisory Committee decide where to invest in off-street parking.

Event Parking District

In 2002, PBOT instituted a Restricted Event Parking District around Providence Park. Parking was limited to 2 hours within the district during events with more than 10,000 attendees at the park. The intent was to help preserve parking for area residents, employees, and customers of area businesses.

PBOT has found that the time limits alone were not effectively managing parking demand during big events. Parking occupancy rose to nearly 97% during Timbers games. The Northwest Parking District Stakeholder Advisory Committee recommended changes, adopted by council, which will go into effect in 2022 at the start of the soccer season:

- The Restricted Event District will now be in place for both Timbers games, and Thorns games.
- Meter rates will rise from \$1.60 to \$4 per hour, from three hours before to three hours after kick-off.

New trash cans

The Northwest Parking District Stakeholder Advisor Committee approved replacing all 42 trash cans in the district. The new city-standard metal cans have twice the capacity and will feature the work of two Portland artists, Mado Hues and Davey Barnwell.



New streetlights

After the Pedestrian Lighting Study helped identify where lighting is inadequate for pedestrians, the district is working to make improvements. In early 2022, we'll install more pedestrian-friendly, cobra-head streetlights in nine locations. This is the first phase of lighting improvement projects. More to come!

Hybrid meetings

We're hopeful and looking forward to meeting in person during 2022! However, all Northwest Parking District meetings will have a way to participate and attend virtually as well.

Learn more

We invite the public to learn more about the Northwest Parking District. Information about projects discussed in this report, and the district’s Stakeholder Advisory Committee, can be found on PBOT’s website at portland.gov/nwparking.



CONTACT US

If you have questions or comments about this report or projects in the Northwest Parking District, please contact:

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